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SNAPSHOT

Sweet Success for Women in Ghor

USAID provides a non-traditional source of income for Ghor's entrepreneurial women



Ghor women are producing and marketing high-quality cookies and smelling the sweet aroma of success.

USAID is strengthening the capacity of women-focused civil-society organizations to contribute to the social, economic, and political development of women throughout Afghanistan.

Chagcharan City is in the center of Ghor Province. Unlike capital cities elsewhere in the world, women are rarely involved in outdoor and social activities. Here, women's activities are restricted to domestic chores giving them little to no access to income-generation or self-sufficiency. Employment prospects are among the lowest in the country.

Yazdani is a local female activist and women's rights advocate. Four years ago, she established the Afghan Organization for Women Affairs and implemented some projects funded by USAID and other donors in Ghor Province. When a new USAID grants team visited the province, she was one of the first women who came forward to apply for a grant with an initiative to help women's economic growth in the community.

With technical assistance from a capacity development facilitator, Yazdani applied for a quick impact grant to launch a project to teach 20 women in Chagcharan City how to bake and market cookies and candies. The project is enabling participants to generate a growing income from sales of products, which will help ensure viable economic sustainability of the initiative.

During the first three months of the project, the women learned cookie and candy-making skills and, despite having only basic marketing skills, they generated \$2,200. The products are improving and the demand is growing in Ghor. The group intends to expand the project by involving more women in the business.

Yazdani said, "Only women can solve their own problems. We should aim to provide similar opportunities for other women in Ghor."